



# 1939

Before  
750

750-  
799

800-  
849

850-  
899

900-  
924

925-  
949

950-  
974

975-  
000



## A Year to Remember

**1939**

**President:**

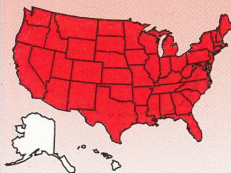
Franklin D. Roosevelt

**States:**

48

**Major event:**

The start of  
World War II in Europe



On September 1, 1939, the world's last fragile hopes for peace were shattered when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, Great Britain and France responded by declaring war against Germany. The nightmare of World War II had begun.

Most Americans hoped to avoid involvement in "Europe's war," and were relieved when President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced that the U.S. would remain neutral. The country was emerging from the long economic slump known as the Depression. Optimistic about the future, millions flocked to New York City's World's Fair to see "The World of Tomorrow," which included the first television studio and a vision of life in 1960. Moviegoers crowded theaters to see two of the most popular films of all time: *Gone With the Wind* and *The Wiz-*

*ard of Oz*, both made in a new process called Technicolor. Hearts broke when baseball's "Iron Horse," Lou Gehrig, retired from the New York Yankees because of a fatal illness. And hearts swelled as contralto Marian Anderson gave a concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt had arranged Anderson's performance after the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to allow the African-American singer to perform in Constitution Hall.

## **Did you know...**

**The nerve disease that ended Lou Gehrig's baseball career, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, is now known as Lou Gehrig's disease.**